



# NEWSLETTER

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY**



## GOVERNOR DAUGAARD SIGNS SB 91



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Veterans, legislators and Sioux Falls partners gathered in Pierre as Governor Daugaard signed SB 91—an act to create a State Veterans Cemetery in Sioux Falls.

SDDVA is currently in the process of preparing the pre-application for the VA federal funding grant.

# **SDNG LEADS NATION IN ENERGY CONSERVATION**

Stephen Smith, an employee for the South Dakota National Guard, decides to head to the office and work over a cold, winter weekend. It's a nice, quiet day because it's an off-drill weekend for traditional National Guard Soldiers.

Smith soon realizes that the temperature is a bit colder inside than usual. The thermostat is set to 50-55 degrees and no matter how the thermostat is adjusted, the temperature does not budge. Buildings are set to lower temperatures during hours and days when they're vacated to decrease the amount of energy consumption they're using.

The SDNG's Operations and Maintenance Branch, Construction and Facilities Management Office, implemented this statewide automation system to remotely control heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems across 45 SDNG buildings throughout 15 South Dakota communities to maximize energy efficiency, which has been crucial in energy savings, said Haltiner.

The automation system also aids in controlling air handlers, heat pumps, water heaters, exterior lighting, boilers, furnaces and exhaust fans, to name a few.

Over the last 12 years, the SDNG has led the nation in efforts to reduce energy consumption, and its energy management program is designed to create a greener, safer and more cost-effective organization.

The statewide automation system is just one way in which the organization has improved its energy conservation efforts. Other projects include passive heating solar walls, redesign and replacement of HVAC and boiler systems, and the implementation and replacement of LED lighting in buildings throughout the state, said Haltiner.

These modifications have resulted in an annual savings of \$248,931 and a cumulative cost avoidance of well over \$1 million since fiscal year 2010.

The executive order required each state to reduce their energy consumption efforts by at least 3 percent per year in order to reach their 30 percent 10-year goal. When Haltiner took over as the energy manager in 2010, the SDNG's energy consumption levels were at its highest.

The reduction efforts haven't gone unnoticed either, as the National Guard Bureau rewards the SDNG with increased funding allocations each year to continue making improvements for conservation efforts.

The state received \$120,000 for energy projects two years ago, \$500,000 last year and will receive more than \$850,000 this year.

The funding is critical because the new presidential executive order demands a decrease in energy consumption by 25 percent from 2016-2025. The SDNG is currently 0.5 percent ahead of its 2.5 percent per year reduction goal.

The significance of the SDNG's success in energy consumption and its efforts moving forward has also had a positive impact for those in the organization.

# SD GUARD FAMILY READINESS GROUP RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

For the fifth time in six years, the Department of Defense awarded a South Dakota Army National Guard unit with the Reserve Family Readiness Award for the Army National Guard. The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs presented the Huron and Parkston-based 153rd Engineer Battalion and its Forward Support Company with the award for 2017 at the Pentagon, March 23.

The annual award is presented to one unit from each of the seven Reserve components that demonstrate excellence in engaging with and supporting their members' families. Units represented come from the Army National Guard, Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve and the Coast Guard Reserve.

Volunteer team leaders from the Huron and Parkston family readiness groups joined state and national military representatives for the awards program at the Pentagon.





# WORLD WAR II VETERANS IN MARSHALL COUNTY RECOGNIZED

The Britton Winter Expo Show was the setting for a ceremony to honor six World War II Veterans living in Marshall County and to present them with their South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs WW II Medal.

Marshall County Veterans Service Officer Dave Daberkow hosted the program and VFW Post 3507 member Dan Schott assisted in presenting each of the honorees with their medal. Approximately 150 family members, friends, and others attended the event.



(Photo provided by the Britton Journal)

## BHNC UNACCOMPANIED VETERANS CEREMONY

The Black Hills National Cemetery will host its quarterly Military Honors Ceremony for Unaccompanied Veterans. On Monday, April 2, at 9:00 am (MT). The ceremony will be held at the BHNC Committal Shelter (main flag pole) in Sturgis.

This ceremony provides Military Funeral Honors to those Veterans interred at the cemetery over the previous quarter, who did not have honors at the time of burial. The Sturgis Honor Guard and Army National Guard will be performing honors.

# NATIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY MONTH

National Social Security Month is an annual celebration in April that commemorates Social Security's promise of economic security for the nation's people. During this month, Social Security and its partners promote educational materials to emphasize the importance of financial planning.

The focus of this year's National Social Security Month is the promotion of their convenient suite of online services and planning tools. From estimating or managing your benefits, to requesting a replacement card, and retiring online. Social Security's online services put control at your fingertips.

Visit: <https://www.ssa.gov/online services/>

if you want to learn more about replacing a social security card, applying for benefits, obtaining a statement, appealing a decision, estimate your future benefits, and more.



# HERO COMES HOME 77 YEARS LATER

A South Dakota sailor who died in the Pearl Harbor attack will be buried in his hometown this week.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency says the remains of Navy Water Tender 2nd Class Porter Rich of Lake Preston are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors March 31. A memorial service will be held at 2:00 pm at the Lake Preston High School Gymnasium.

The 27-year-old Rich was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Rich.

From December 1941 to June 1944, Navy personnel recovered the remains of the deceased crew, which were subsequently interred in the Halawa and Nu'uauu Cemeteries.

In September 1947, tasked with recovering and identifying fallen U.S. personnel in the Pacific Theater, members of the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) disinterred the remains of U.S. casualties from the two cemeteries and transferred them to the Central Identification Laboratory at Schofield Barracks. The laboratory staff was only able to confirm the identifications of 35 men from the USS Oklahoma at that time. The AGRS subsequently buried the unidentified remains in 46 plots at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP), known as the Punchbowl, in Honolulu. In October 1949, a military board classified those who could not be identified as non-recoverable, including Rich.

In April 2015, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a policy memorandum directing the disinterment of unknowns associated with the USS Oklahoma. On June 15, 2015, DPAA personnel began exhuming the remains from the NMCP for analysis.

To identify Rich's remains, scientists from DPAA and the [Armed Forces Medical Examiner System](#) used mitochondrial (mtDNA) analysis, which matched his family, as well as circumstantial evidence and laboratory analysis, to include dental comparisons and anthropological analysis, which matched his records.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for Americans who went missing while serving our country, visit the DPAA website at [www.dpaa.mil](http://www.dpaa.mil), find us on social media at [www.facebook.com/dodpaa](https://www.facebook.com/dodpaa) or call (703) 699-1420.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

2018

Apr 2—State Offices Closed  
Apr 2—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Ceremony—BHNC—Sturgis—9:00 am (MT)  
Apr 27-29—DAV State Convention—The Lodge—Deadwood  
May 11—AHEC Improving Veterans Care Conference—University Center—Sioux Falls  
May 11—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Domiciliary Auditorium—Hot Springs —10:00 am (MT)  
Jun 7-10—American Legion State Convention—Spearfish  
Jun 14-17—VFW State Convention—Sioux Falls  
Jul 11—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—PVA Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)  
Jul 12—Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Cemetery Grand Opening—Sisseton—11:00 am (CT)  
Jul 13 —VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Education Classroom—Fort Meade—10:00 am (MT)  
Jul 14-17—DAV National Convention—Reno, NV  
Jul 21-25—VFW National Convention—Kansas City, MO  
Jul 26—VABHHCS Veterans Town Hall—Post 8 American Legion—Pierre  
Aug 20-24—SDDVA Benefits School—Ramkota—Pierre  
Aug 24-30—American Legion National Convention—Minneapolis, MN  
Sept 14—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—VFW Post 1273—Rapid City—10:00 am (MT)  
Oct 10—SD Veterans Commission Meeting—Soldiers and Sailors Building—Pierre—8:00 am (CT)  
Nov 16—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Domiciliary Auditorium—Hot Springs —10:00 am (MT)



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